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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS
Surprise \$8.5 billion aid from U.S. - Milliyet
Gen. Osman to set up HQ in Silopi - Hurriyet
Bagdad can resist for six months - Sabah
U.S. troops at Baghdad doorstep - Aksam
Desert storm hits U.S., UK troops - Aksam
Barzani: I'm out - Turkiye
Blair: Northern Iraqi Kurds will stay autonomous - Vatan

OPINION MAKERS
80 km to Baghdad - Radikal
Baghdad preparing to resist - Cumhuriyet
Epidemic might hit 100,000 children in Basra - Yeni Safak
Rumsfeld defends his war strategy - Zaman
Ankara: Iraq might turn into another Lebanon - Radikal
NYT urges Perle to resign - Yeni Safak

FINANCIAL JOURNALS
Fitch lowers Turkey's grade to B(-) - Dunya
Khalilzad believes aid might be extended to Turkey via IMF -
Finansal Forum

BRIEFING

Iraq: In a 'surprising' change of attitude, say papers, the White House has offered Turkey \$1 billion in grants which could be used to get loans up to \$8.5 billion. The loan aims to keep Turkey out of Northern Iraq, and to encourage increased cooperation with the U.S. 'The grant might be jeopardized if Turkey enters Northern Iraq,' an anonymous U.S. official said. "Vatan" reports about the ongoing disagreement between the U.S. and Turkey over political and military issues. The U.S. says Turkish troops should be put under the command of coalition forces, while Turkey prefers independent action that would be coordinated with U.S. troops. "Zaman" carries the U.S. concern that Turkish troops might be permanently settled in the region. AKP officials are busy drafting a new motion for cooperation with the U.S., papers report. According to the motion, the U.S. will be advised to deploy troops in Northern Iraq instead of Turkey, and to keep Kurdish groups under control. On the other hand, Parliamentary Speaker Arinc blamed the Turkish press on Tuesday for being a mouthpiece for the Pentagon. 'Those who block democracy from prevailing in the region can't complain of Saddam. The U.S.-UK operation against Iraq without a UN decision is not legitimate,' Arinc said. The commander of U.S. special forces in Northern Iraq, General Henry Osman, said on Tuesday that they would exert efforts to coordinate humanitarian aid for refugees and the protection of minorities in the region. "Hurriyet" claims Gen. Osman is planning to set up his HQ in the Turkish border town of Silopi. Papers report that the U.S. delivered six search and rescue helicopters and 82 containers of military equipment to Iskenderun port on Tuesday. The MFA confirmed that the helicopters came for humanitarian purposes. Most papers asserted that U.S. personnel are not leaving Turkey. "Turkiye claims that Washington has been abandoned by allied Kurdish groups. PUK leader Talabani, engaged in a conflict with Iranian groups on the border, is trying to avoid fighting with Iraqi

forces. Barzani is reluctant to fight with the Iraqis as well, saying he does not have sufficient troops or weapons. U.S. Presidential Envoy Khalilzad had to go to Northern Iraq to convince Kurdish leaders to be more supportive. The U.S.-led military campaign might trigger civil war in Iraq, an anonymous Turkish intelligence source told "Radikal." Kurds might confront Arabs in the north, and Shiites might attack Sunnis in the south. That is why Ankara is against U.S. plans for controlling Kirkuk in cooperation with Talabani, and sharing control of Mosul with Barzani. Meanwhile, in a televised press conference from Diyarbakir, TGS Chief General Ozkok said Wednesday morning that a possible attack on Turkish troops in Northern Iraq or a flow of refugees have been Turkey's most serious security concerns. If Turkish forces present in the region cannot manage to cope with such threats, Ankara might consider sending additional troops there, Gen. Ozkok said. 'However, our strategic ally, the United States, is currently engaged in a war in the region, and we will coordinate our action with the U.S.' 'We do not intend to set up a permanent buffer zone inside Northern Iraq. If developments reach a certain point, we won't engage in armed conflict except if needed for self-defense. Despite all our transparency, some allied countries' skeptical view of Turkey has deeply affected the Turkish people. I can't understand those who see a threat overseas but don't believe Turkey faces the same kind of threat just across its border,' the General said. Ozkok also said that 'Iraq must be disarmed for the security of Turkey and the region, but without ridding it of its capability of self-defense. However, this is neither our war nor our task. Our foreign policy requires that Iraq's oil resources should be used by the entire Iraqi nation.'

EDITORIAL OPINION: War in Iraq

"The US in Iraq: An invader or savior?"
Mehmet Barlas argued in mass appeal Sabah (3/26): "Currently the people of Iraq, regardless of their being pro-Saddam or not, consider the US army as an invader. The psychology is much different from that of the days of Desert Storm. Iraqis were well aware of their mistake in invading Kuwait. Therefore the Desert Storm operation did not experience any resistance on the Iraqi side. . However, the situation is not the same at present. The US seems to be fighting to capture Iraq after toppling Saddam. The Iraqis are fighting against the power that invades their motherland. In the eyes of the Iraqi people, being saved from Saddam cannot be an excuse for being invaded by the US. It is clear that once the war is over and an American victory secured, the US identity in Iraq will be as 'occupying force,' not 'savior.'"

"The war and Turkish foreign policy"
Sami Kohen expects some Turkish foreign policy changes during the post-war era in mass appeal Milliyet (3/26): "Once the war is over, there will be an immediate impact on Turkish foreign policy. Given the fact that strategic relations between Turkey and the US have been damaged, it remains to be seen whether Turkish foreign policy will incline more toward the EU side or the Islamic world. . The Turkish government, as can be seen in a statement by Foreign Minister Gul, is stressing that the tiff with the US is completely undesired and has not been created deliberately. Turkey does not consider EU and the US as alternatives to each other. .The wise thing to do for the future of Turkish foreign policy is to pursue efforts to enhance relations with both the US and the EU. The same argument goes for other international policy centers as well. Yet the overall atmosphere in the Iraq war as well as its outcome will shape the new trends in Turkish foreign policy."

PEARSON